

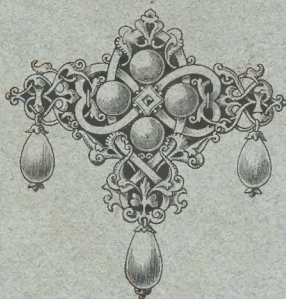
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EXAMPLES OF ART WORKMANSHIP OF VARIOUS AGES  
AND COUNTRIES.



# DECORATIVE FURNITURE FRENCH

*Under the Sanction of the Science and Art Department, for the  
Use of Schools of Art and Amateurs.*



LONDON:

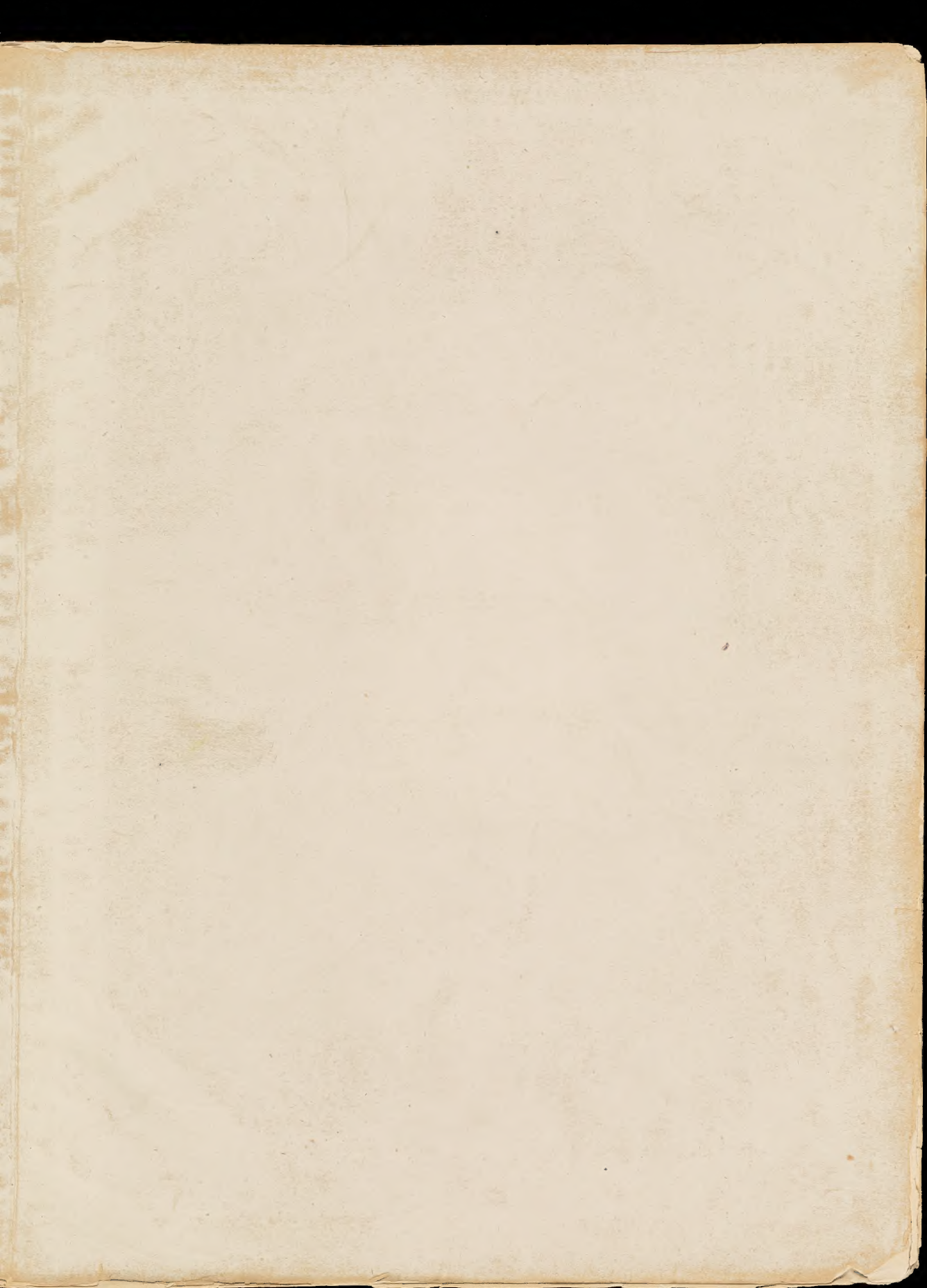
PUBLISHED BY THE ARUNDEL SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING  
THE KNOWLEDGE OF ART, 24, OLD BOND STREET;

SOLD BY BELL AND DALDY, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

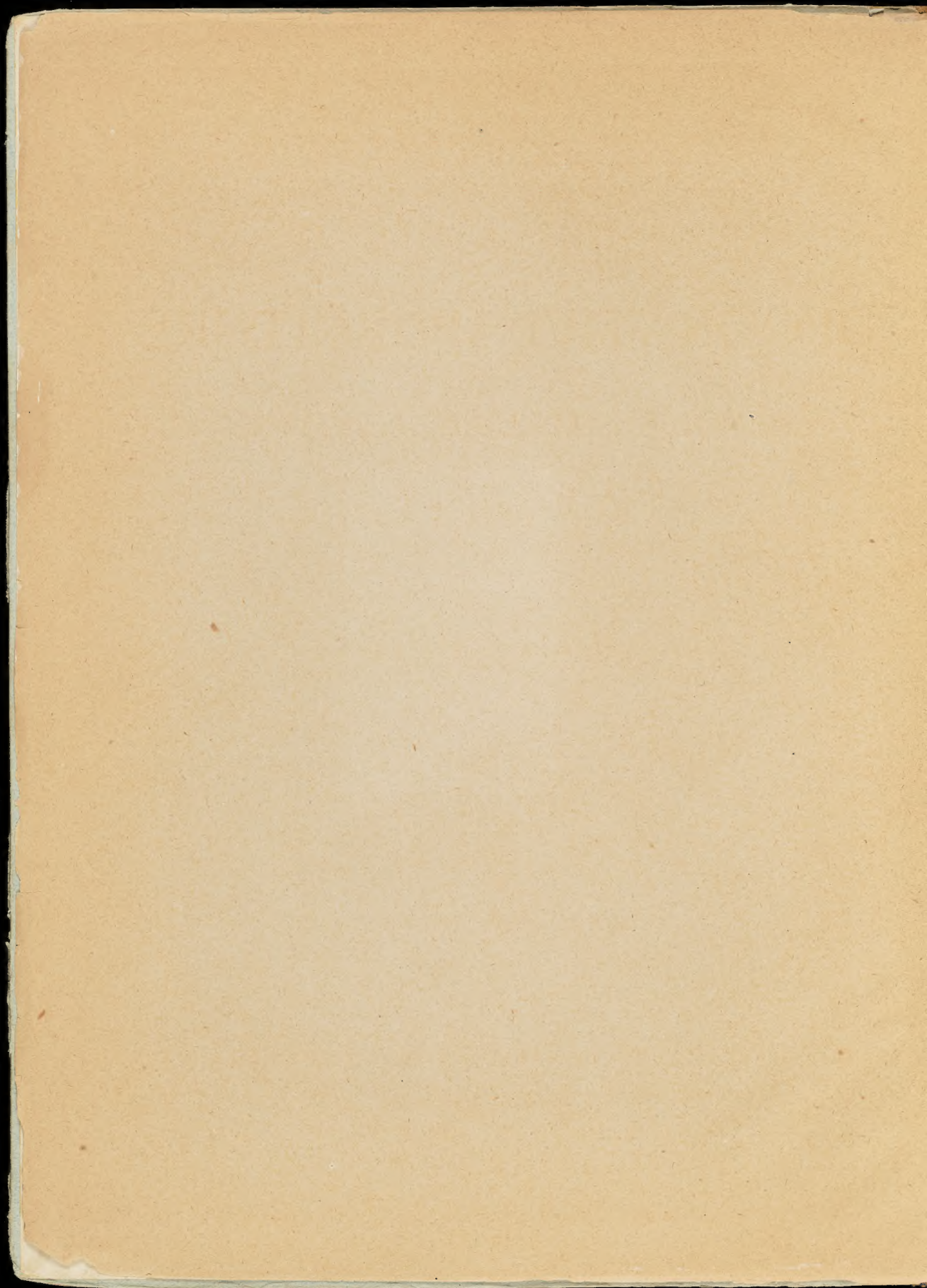
1871.











EXAMPLES OF ART WORKMANSHIP OF VARIOUS AGES  
AND COUNTRIES.



# DECORATIVE FURNITURE

ENGLISH, ITALIAN, GERMAN,

FLEMISH, ETC.

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1871.

DECORATIVE FURNITURE

EXHIBIT ITALIAN GALLERY

ROOM NO. 116



## PREFACE.



THE following series of photographs represent specimens of sumptuous furniture from the different countries of Europe, made during the XVIth, XVIIth, and XVIIIth centuries. They are of English, Flemish, German, and Italian make. It will be observed that the furniture of the sixteenth and following century are, to a great extent, Italian in design and feeling; the artists of every country in Europe, having either gone to study in Italy, or followed the designs and principles taught in the academies of that country.

The great revival, or renaissance of the arts of sculpture and painting, took its rise in Italy, and the ancient models of Rome or of Greece, as they survived in Roman examples, dominated the whole course of art in Italy first, and afterwards throughout Europe.

Peculiar circumstances contributed to this result. The long absence of the popes from Rome, their residence at Avignon, came to an end in the fifteenth century. The schisms of the antipopes were then over, and Rome, which had been half depopulated during these political troubles, was once more restored to prosperity.

The Roman architectural ideal pervaded all kinds of structure, whether of actual building or of decorations and household furniture.

It is difficult for us to understand the immense enthusiasm that arose in the end of the fifteenth and in the century that followed for classical antiquity. Not only was Rome once more the centre of European politics, but the invasion of the Eastern Empire, and the capture of Constantinople by Mahomet II., drove what remained of Greek literary culture and artistic pre-eminence to seek a refuge in Western Europe. The Greek language was learnt, and Greek lite-

rature revived in Italy. With this revival coincided the settlement of Italy, and learned men from all nations met at the ancient capital of the world—the Eternal City. Such temples, triumphal arches, columns, and obelisks as remained erect, filled the imaginations of pilgrims and travellers with an enthusiasm for the long buried glories of imperial Rome. It is not surprising that as temples and porticoes, classical colonnades and friezes, became the models of revived architecture, triumphal arches, Roman tombs and sarcophagi should have formed the models for cabinets and chests; as Roman curule chairs, and trapezophora, or lion-headed and goat-footed chair and table supports were the forms into which tables and chairs were shaped. When Leo X., a member of the Medici family who had so powerfully encouraged art in Florence, succeeded to the pontifical throne, this patronage of the revived art, and the Roman ideal that ruled in it, exercised their influence over every country in Europe.

Hence we see classic-figure sculpture, acanthus-leaved mouldings, and the arabesque ornaments that were brought to light while Raphael was designing the palace of the Vatican, forming the general elements of decorative work in wood, ivory, marble, or whatever material was employed in furnishing the palaces of Europe, whether in Italy, France, Germany, Flanders, or England.

It is not easy, indeed, to assign with exactness the country in which each several piece of furniture or wood-carving of those times has been worked. But certain national predilections and peculiarities, in most cases, make themselves felt.

The *pietra dura* or polished stone inlay, of agates and other hard pebbles was the special characteristic of the Grand Ducal factories at Florence, where tables, cabinet-panels, &c., continued to be made down to the expulsion of the Dukes of Tuscany.

It is still made; but the taste and skill of the old work have not survived the break-up of the former establishments.



# DECORATIVE FURNITURE.

ENGLISH, ITALIAN, GERMAN, FLEMISH,  
ETC.

I.



EBONY CABINET, encrusted on the inside with silver.

*Belonging to the Rev. Thomas Bacon.*

The principal decoration of this cabinet consists in the graceful engravings of the metal mounts. The base of the work is ebony. The construction is plain. The outline of the whole square, and no portion of the holding capacity or accommodation wasted, for which alone a cabinet should be really designed. The doors are kept flat within, and a panel of engraved silver plate let into each of the two valves. A central compartment, formed into an architectural façade, with a pair of arches, supported by columns, and surmounted by a curved broken pediment and corner urns, divides from each other two sets of drawers, four in each. The drawer fronts form eight panels of arabesque work, chased on silver. The drawer panels are framed with the wavy mouldings attributed to the invention of Hans Schwanhard, about 1621. This would give the cabinet a date of about or soon after that period, and a German origin, as we hardly meet with these in Italian work at so early a period.

II.

CABINET OF CARVED WALNUT. Flemish, early 16th century.

*From the Collection of Mr. J. Brunel.*

This piece reminds us of the general form of goldsmiths' work of the middle ages, such as monstres and reliquaries. The upper portion projects each side beyond the centre, and that, again, stands on a base wider but less wide than the top. It is thus like a frame or case, which has a leg and a foot to support it. The upper portion is designed as an architectural façade, with one narrow and two wide panels, supported by columns on the outer, and pilasters on the inner sides. Niches with conch hoods contain graceful little statuettes in very high relief. An architrave and cornice are above, and pedestals with intervening panels form a plinth below. All are decorated with graceful arabesque work. The middle part forms a broad arch on pilasters. Two half arches spring from it, forming brackets to the upper part. The base is a broad panel. All the lower panels are filled with arabesques. Graceful figure-subjects are interspersed, and a bust surrounded by a wreath on a large scale, that of the owner probably, is set in the tympanum of the central arch. This piece resembles the celebrated screen to the town-hall of Oudenarde, carved by Peter Van Schelden, 1530. It is Italian throughout in the details, but the peculiar and graceful general outline recalls the mediæval feeling that long lingered amongst the renaissance designs of Flanders. It is probably of the date of 1530-40.

III.

FOLDING CHAIR, carved in walnut. Italian, 16th century. *South Kensington Museum.*

This is an example of the popular form of chair for state reception-rooms in Italy in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The cross-pieces forming back and legs and the intermediate bars are all held by wooden pegs. The front of the seat and the bar of the back are similarly fastened. They can be easily folded and carried away. The face of the front and back pieces are carved with arabesques and heraldry. The form is derived from that of the "sella curulis," the chair of senators and consuls of ancient Rome.

IV.

TWO CARVED CHAIRS, parcel gilt. Italian, 16th century. *South Kensington Museum.*

The right hand chair is boldly and effectively cut in walnut. The front and back pieces are cut into grotesque female figures running into strap-work and bold scrolls. On the top of the back are figures of cupids, and a shield below bearing three lions passant. It is probably Venetian.

CHAIR, carved and gilt. Italian, 16th century. *South Kensington Museum.*

This is more delicate and graceful in design and execution than the preceding. The back is panelled, and forms something like a comfortable support to the sitter. The front support is formed by grotesque female

figures and strap-work. It curves out balustrade-wise, and returns as it descends with a well-judged outline. The base spreads like two feet. The arms of the Da Polenta of Ravenna are on the front, an eagle displayed and crowned. It has, however, probably been made at Venice or Florence.

V.

CASSONE OR CHEST, of carved walnut-wood. Italian, 16th century.

*South Kensington Museum.*

This is one of several fine chests of Italian renaissance make, at South Kensington. The general form is that of the classic sarcophagus. The main body of it is carved into medallions with shells in them. Bold wreaths round these, and equally bold masks at the corners and intermediate spaces, contrast well with the delicate architectural mouldings and details of the hollow or concave part above, which retires from the eye to give effect to the bulged outline below.

VI.

CARVED VENETIAN COFFER. Italian, 16th century.

*Belonging to Earl Amherst.*

We see in the more broken outline and less graceful form of this chest, that the earlier design of the sixteenth century declined into new and less agreeable forms as the century ran out. This piece may be placed at 1580 or 1590. Still we recognize a certain facility and boldness of line which developed still more in the Low Countries and in France during the seventeenth century. The smaller details are well cut. They are all of architectural character.

VII.

CARVED CHESNUT CABINET. Italian, early 16th century.

*South Kensington Museum.*

Few specimens of renaissance furniture of this form can be compared with this and a fellow chest, in the Kensington Museum. The general outline gives us three parallel spaces or divisions. The upper cut with very flat and quiet architectural moulding patterns; the central a grand group of figures representing,—1. the triumph of David, holding the head of Goliath,—and 2. his anointing by Saul as king of Israel. Two graceful figures support a shield, uncarved, in the middle. Images of the greater prophets, supported by winged grotesque human head figures, are planted on the angles. The lower part bulges and retires, and the flat ornament carved on it is perpendicular to the line of the whole. It makes a bold curved base, unbroken, and thoroughly well conceived to set off the sculpture.

VIII.

TABLE OF OAK of the 15th century, and Chairs of the 17th century. English.

*Belonging to John Swaby, Esq.*

This table has been engraved by Mr. Henry Shaw. It has a drawer below, the carving of which belongs to the late mediæval period of Richard III. The four legs are carved and connected below. The top is curiously contrived with flaps. By pulling out the under thickness on each side, resting on a sliding support, the central or upper thickness of the slab falls between, and forms a double sized table.

The chair is of carved walnut wood. The back supports are cut into double screw twists. The fore supports are shaped, and have heads at top. The back panel has pierced and carved stiles and rails, amongst the work of which we recognize the royal crown and supporters. A favourite design for these chairs, with or without arms, during the reign of William and Mary.

IX.

CHAIR, stuffed, and covered with cut velvet.

*From Hampton Court.*

This chair belongs to the days of Anne. In place of the carved supporters of the former reign, we find turned legs, and the whole chair is stuffed and covered with rich Lyons or Genoa velvet brocade, the colour being broken in large patterns, and offering the liveliest contrasts to the eye.

X.

CHAIR, with carved volute legs, and covered with Genoa velvet. English, 17th century.

*From Hampton Court.*

The carved front and back legs mark the use of the old designs, derived and imported from Holland by William the third. The carving, however, on the back, gives place to a solid stuffed back, the stuffing also coming over the framework of the seat. It is covered with Genoa velvet, in full contrast of bright and dark colours. The material is what is known as raised velvet.



## XI.

CHAIR covered in embroidered silk. Italian, 16th century.

*Belonging to Earl Amherst.*

This is an example of the Italian state chair, derived from the old classic curule, or folding chair; which, for great personages, was made of, or veneered with, ivory. This kind of chair, however, could not fold. It is made of wood without the veneers or inlays common in the finer specimens of Italian chair in the sixteenth century. The covering is old Venice or Genoa figured silk. The fringe is the Italian tied silk fringe, and the old nails forming knobs an inch in diameter, remain in it still.

## XII.

ARM CHAIR, two seats, and footstool, to match. English, 1580 to 1600.

*From Knole Park.*

These formed part of the furniture of a set of rooms prepared for the reception of James the First at Knole Park, formerly the seat of the Dukes of Dorset. They are covered with purple velvet and have the original fringe, gilt and round headed nails. The seat, back, arms, and foot bar are stuffed; besides which, the seat is provided with a thick cushion. The two seats fold up. These and the footstool have both the stuffed portions and the square feet covered and trimmed.

## XIII.

DRESSING TABLE AND GLASS in satin wood. English, about 1785.

This table, a specimen of excellent workmanship, veneered with satin wood, is shaped out in front like a Cupid's bow. The legs are mounted with ivory rings. They are turned in the lathe. Four connecting bars rise from them and support an oval dressing box. Small drawers and pedestal cabinets support the heart-shaped glass. The whole decorated with painted wreaths, ribbons and borders of argus eyes. Flowerets, and other dainty flatwork, painted with wreaths, a cupid, a dove, &c. surround the glass; and two figures of the graces, with a cupid, fill oval panels in the little cabinet presses. It is one of several pieces in the same fashion. The figures are probably by, or after, Cipriani. Angelica Kauffman is also known to have painted on furniture of this description.

## XIV.

CARVED WALNUT CABINET, in two parts. Italian, 16th century.

*South Kensington Museum.*

This piece is in two stages. The upper closed by a flap-door, and the lower by a pair of folding-doors. All these portions, as well as the side, framing stiles, rails, &c. are delicately carved with arabesques in relief. Inside, on a shield, are the arms of the Orsini, an historic family in mediæval Roman history. The work is attributed to Jacopo da Canova, and dates between 1520 and 1550.

## XV.

SMALL CABINET of Pietra Dura work. 17th century.

*Belonging to the Duke of Buccleuch.*

This cabinet is an example of the work produced at the grand ducal factories in Florence. The central and narrow side panels are inlaid with such a design as the simple use of good-sized pieces of marbles, lapis, carnelian, and agates, will admit of. The whole is divided into large and small panels by ebony styles with light granulated gilt mounts at the points of intersection.

## XVI.

INLAID CABINET, with metal mounts. 18th century.

The front is supported by three pilasters with metal caps, and the principal ornament is the inlaid work. This fills a large panel in each door, in the form of the vases usual in the Florentine table slabs. Three small panels above, and a wider panel with two narrow ones, three in all, below, are inlaid with little birds and fanciful figure subjects. The work is effective and spirited. It belongs to the middle or later half of the eighteenth century.

## XVII.

EBONY CABINET, enriched with ormolu mounts. 17th century. *Belonging to the Queen.*

The form of this cabinet is as simple as possible. The upper part contains drawers and compartments, and is closed by plain framed doors without mouldings. Central drawer fronts come below this part; and the open space shows two pairs of columnar supports. All stand on a plain base. The doors, drawer fronts, supports, and

under side of the drawer frames are decorated with fine cast and chased gilt-work. On the doors these are set in corner-pieces, and quaint shapes, like garden parterres; the central panels contain mythological compositions. It is of German origin, and the metal-work represents the finest efforts of the 17th century school of chasing in Southern Germany.

## XVIII.

## CARVED CABINET AND STAND. German, 16th century.

The piece is in two divisions. The upper portion is a square architectural façade divided by four columns. The centre division contains one large panel, and the sides, two each. They are filled by carvings in pear or other light-coloured wood, representing scenes from Æsop's fables. The top is surmounted by little figures. The centre rises, and is covered by a pediment, also surmounted by children and animals. The columns rest on a plinth, with panels and projecting pieces for each column. Those at the sides are set on the angles. The lower portion rests on winged sitting monsters, with a panel full of carvings in relief between. The whole stands on a base. We are reminded by the supports of some of the designs of Sansovino, the Venetian sculptor. The animal sculpture, on the other hand, has more of German than Italian humour.

## XIX.

## CABINET, of carved work and intarsiatura. English, 16th century.

*South Kensington Museum.*

The general form is that of a classic or renaissance gateway. It stands on arches, with piers and columns at the four angles. Above the cabinet forms an architectural façade, with arches and panels of carved work on the front and sides. The insides of the doors and of the architrave and cornice, which opens as a flap, are inlaid with strap-work and grotesque figures in coloured woods. The base has a border of Tudor roses, and the portcullis badge. Inside we see terminal figures, making a division into four. These are subdivided into drawers and pigeon-holes closed by arched architectural, and plain square, panels. Each is occupied by a quaint symbolic composition with an explanatory legend below in latin, let in in white paint or paste. These compositions are carved in boxwood, with a delicacy and perfection only seen on the finest specimens of Italian or German (Nuremberg or Pomeranian) work of the renaissance period. No woodwork of this kind except the medallions of Albert Durer and the "petits maitres" who carried on his school of minute sculpture, can compare with the artistic completeness of these carvings. If executed in England, we must suppose that Holbein gave the designs and supervised the execution. No other artist of that day could have turned out work so entirely answering to the highest accomplishments of the period.

## XX.

## CHAIR OF WROUGHT IRON, presented to the Emperor Rudolph the Second. 16th century.

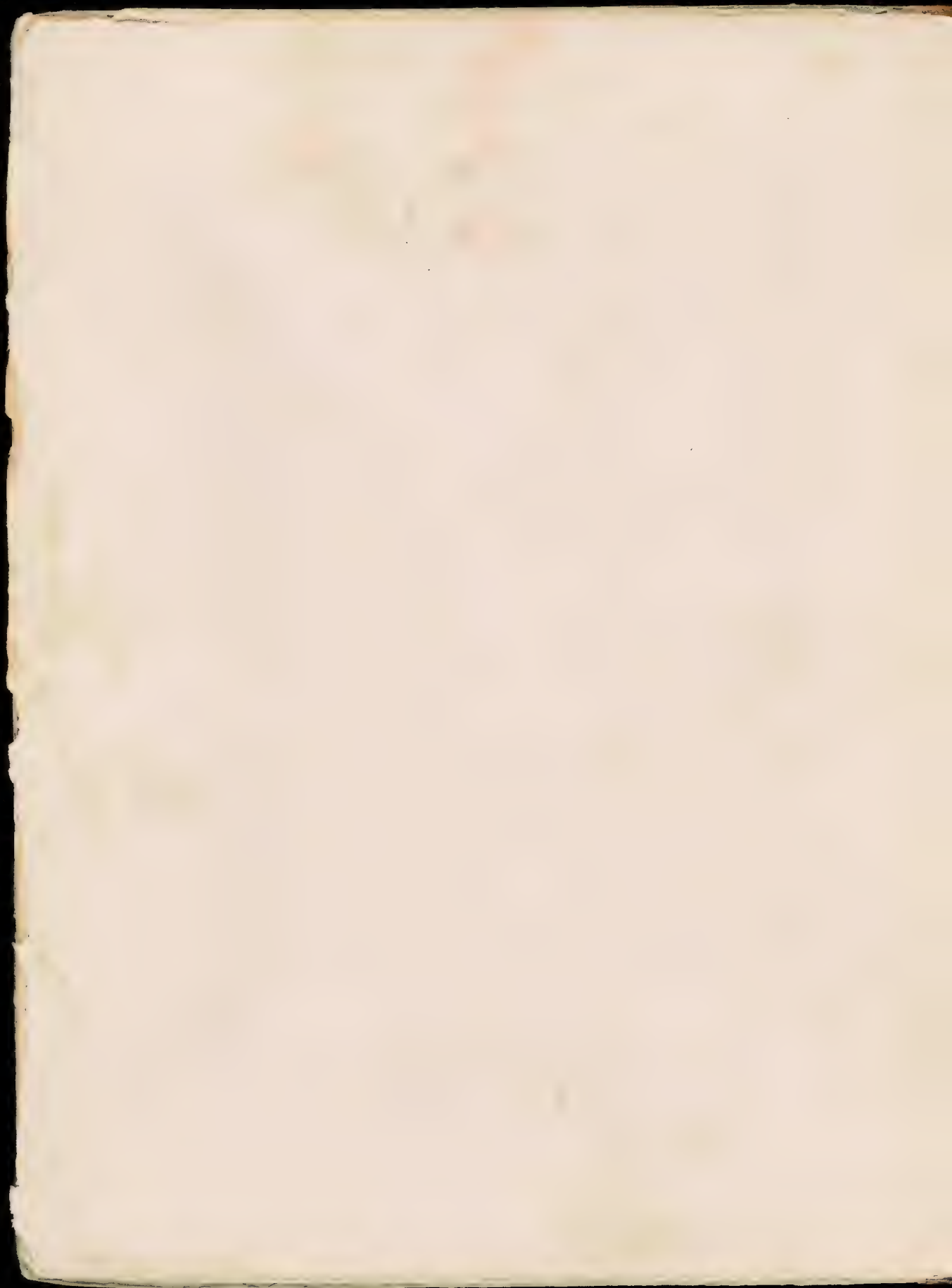
*Belonging to the Earl of Radnor.*

This magnificent work is in the general form of an ancient curule chair. The under curved portions are first joined and then spread out below in four curved supports, by a central boss. Figures of Ulysses, Penelope, Achilles, and Briseis are mounted on the front of these supports; and a demi-figure of a mermaid with four volutes unites the whole below. The arm and back supports are elaborately wrought with rich arabesque-work in relief. The seat is tied to them with cords and tassels. The upper part of the back contains a triumphal procession, cut "à jour" and the horses and figures elaborately chased. Above that, rising in a pedimental form, are two tiers of sculpture, representing Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and over this a portrait-medallion of the Emperor Rudolph II.; on the knob beneath the seat is the artist's name "Thomas Ruker," and on the reverse "Fecit anno 1574."



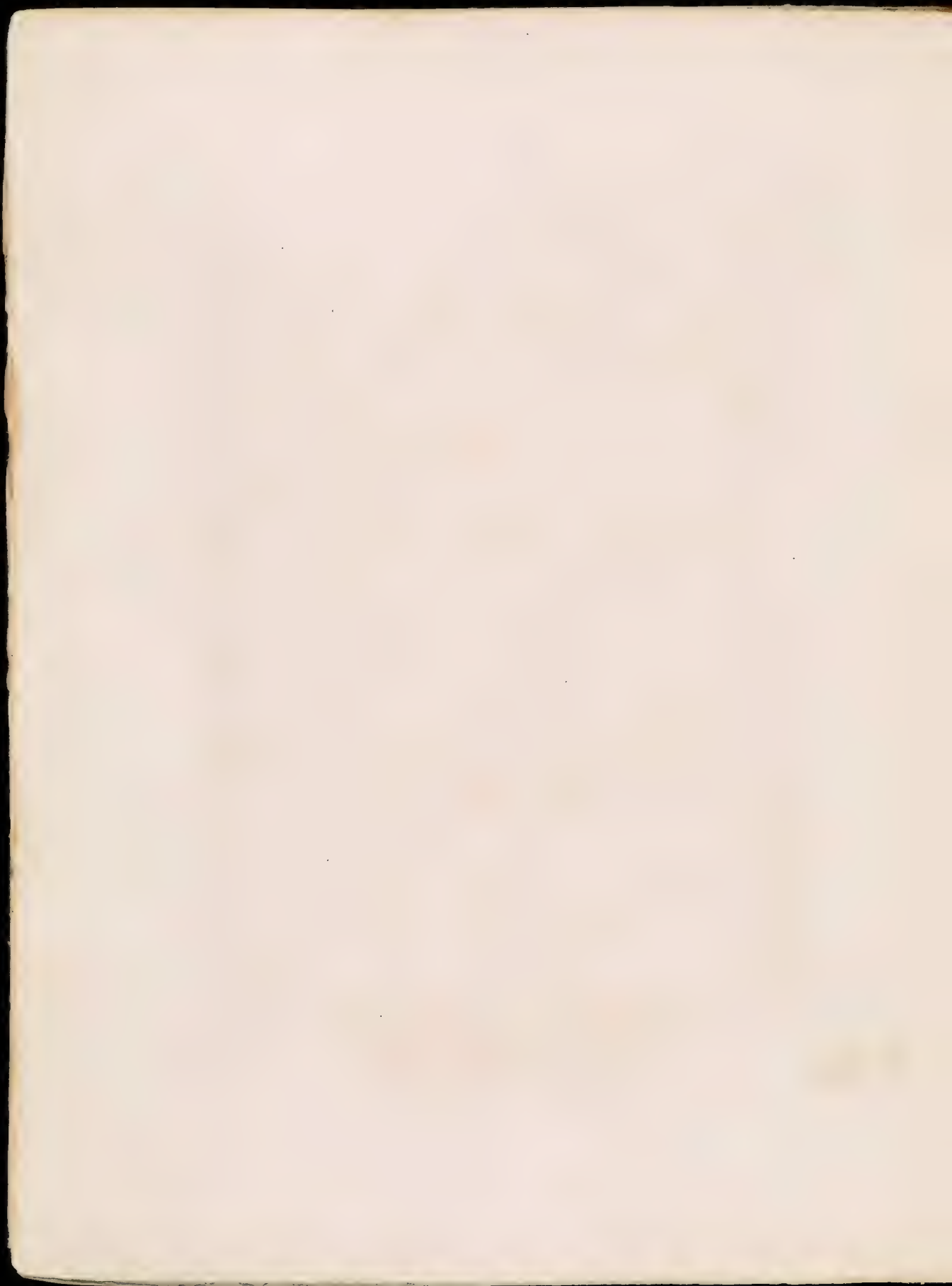


EBONY CABINET.  
ENCROUSTED ON THE INSIDE WITH SILVER  
*In the possession of the Rev. Thos. Bacon.*











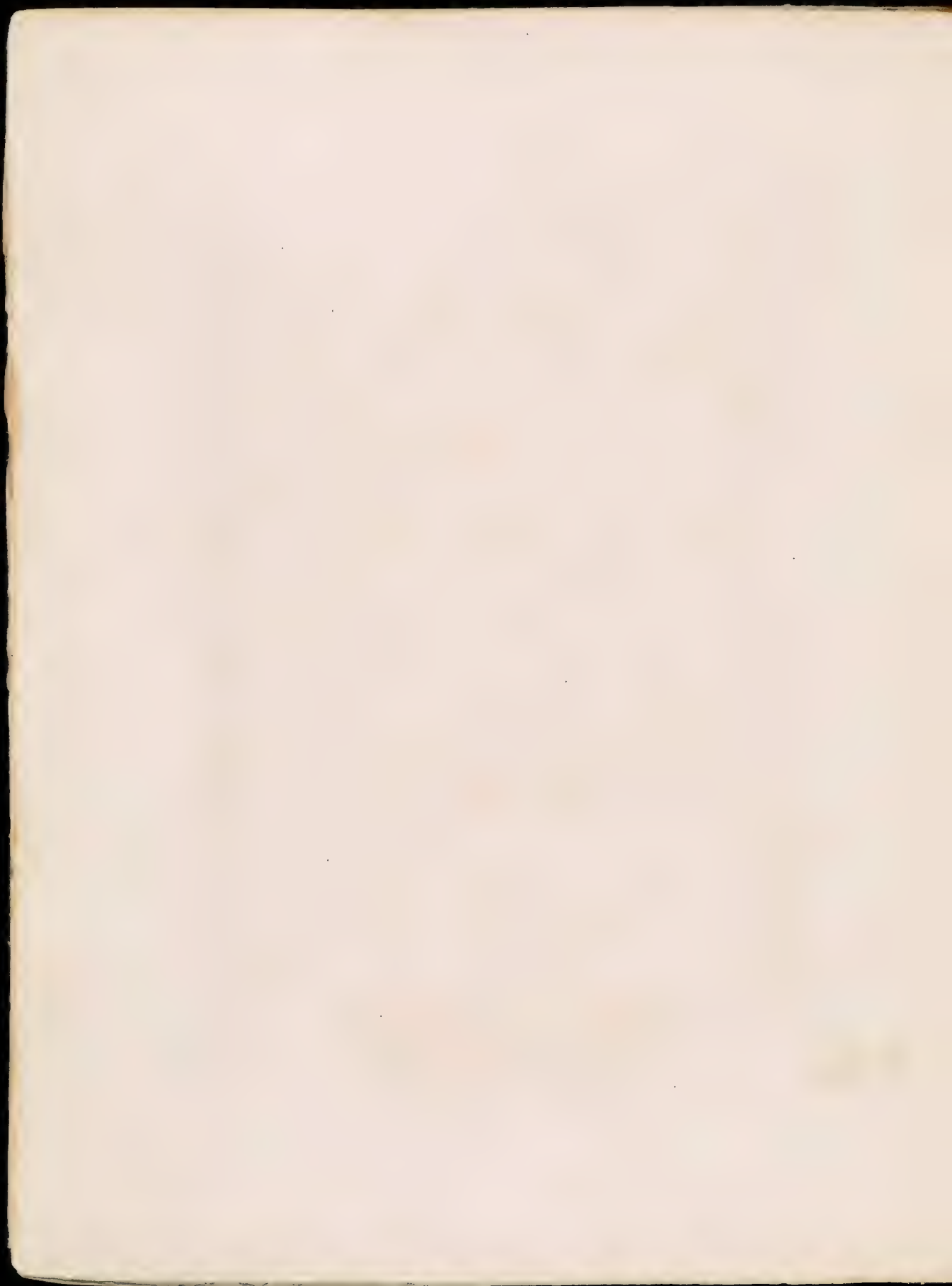


III.

FOLDING CHAIR.

CARVED WALNUT WOOD. ITALIAN, 16TH CENTURY

*South Kensington Museum*



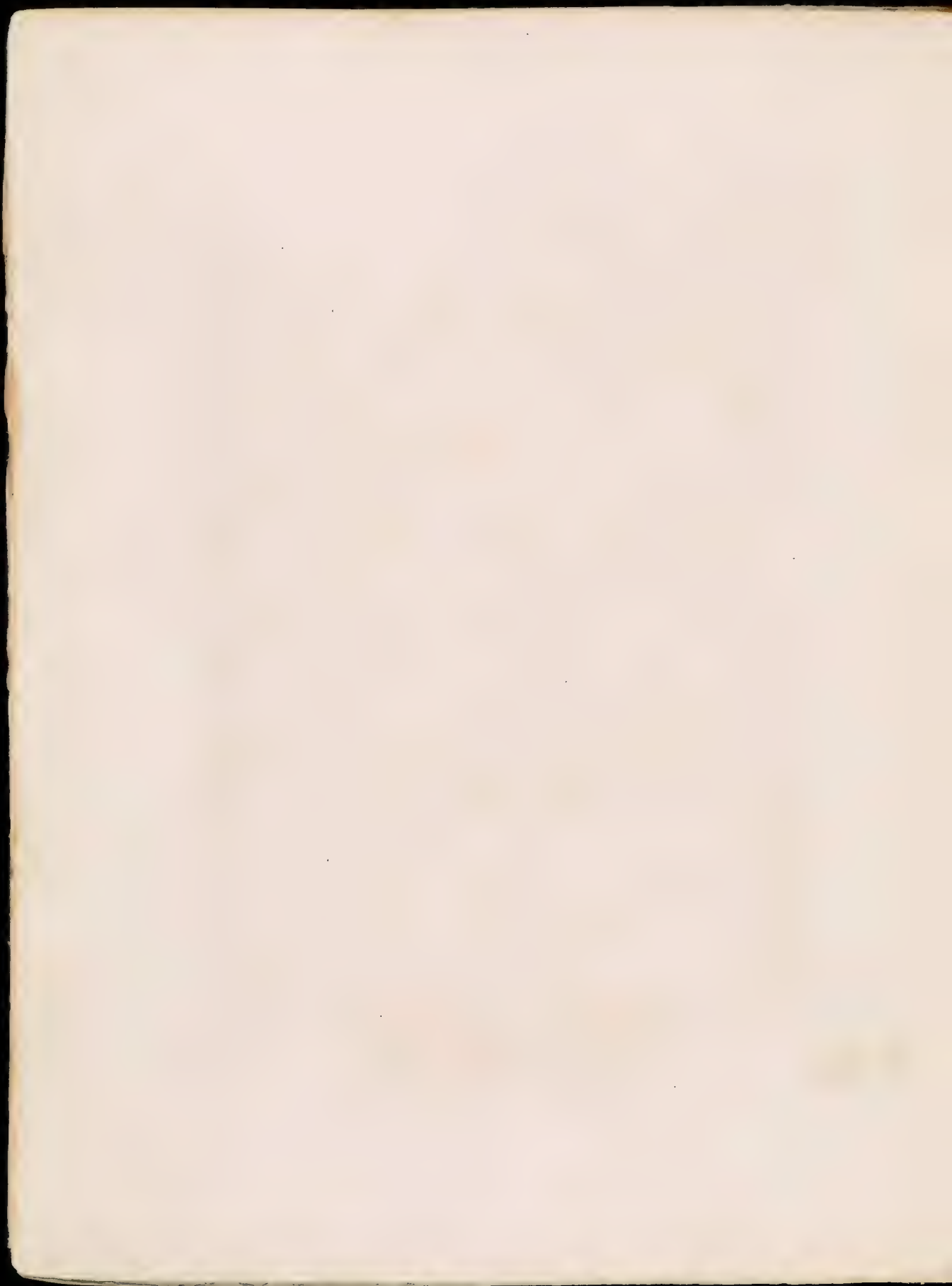




CASSONE OR CHEST

1550-1560. 1550-1560. 1550-1560.

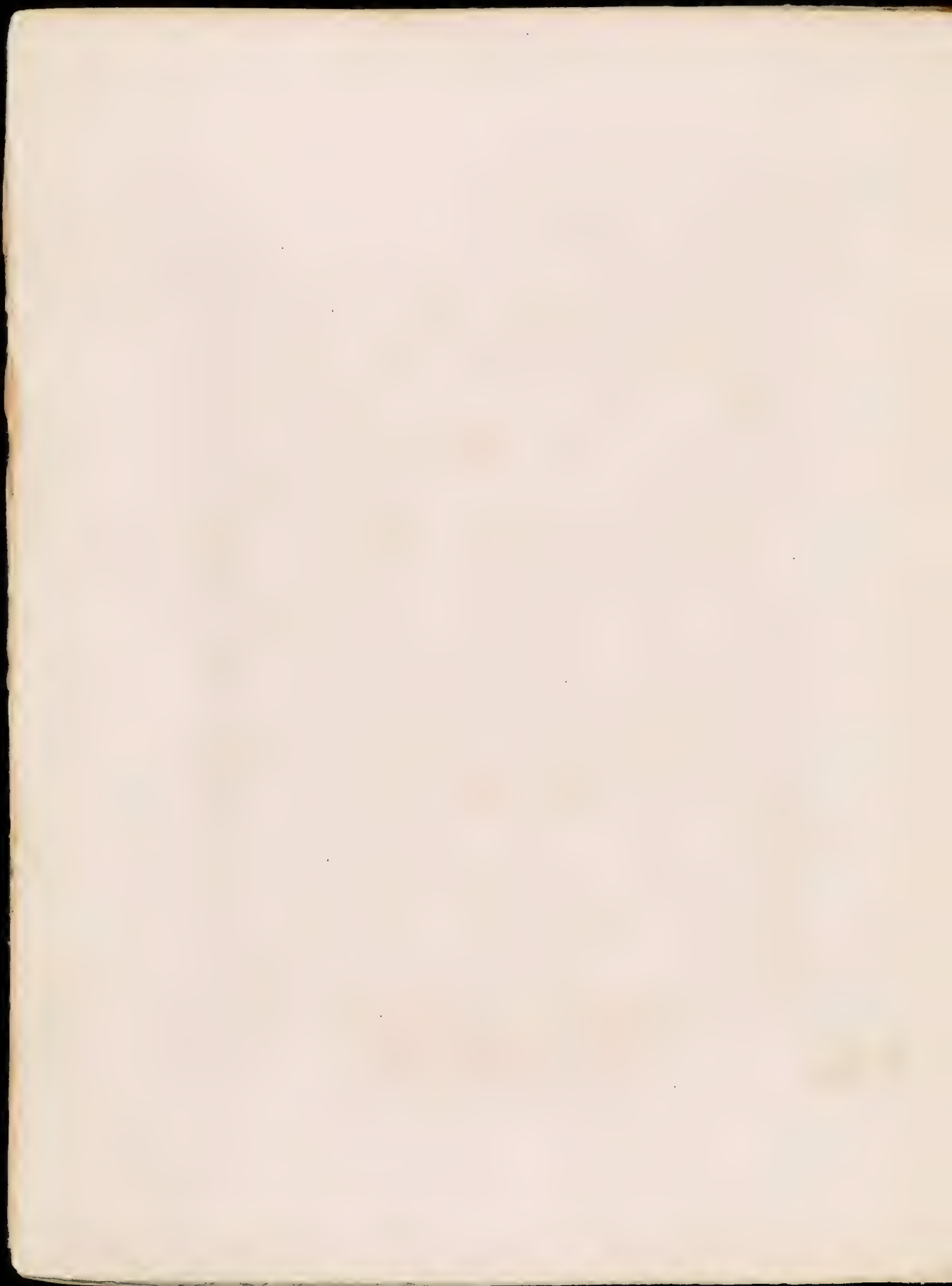
*Sala N. 10, Palazzo Medici*

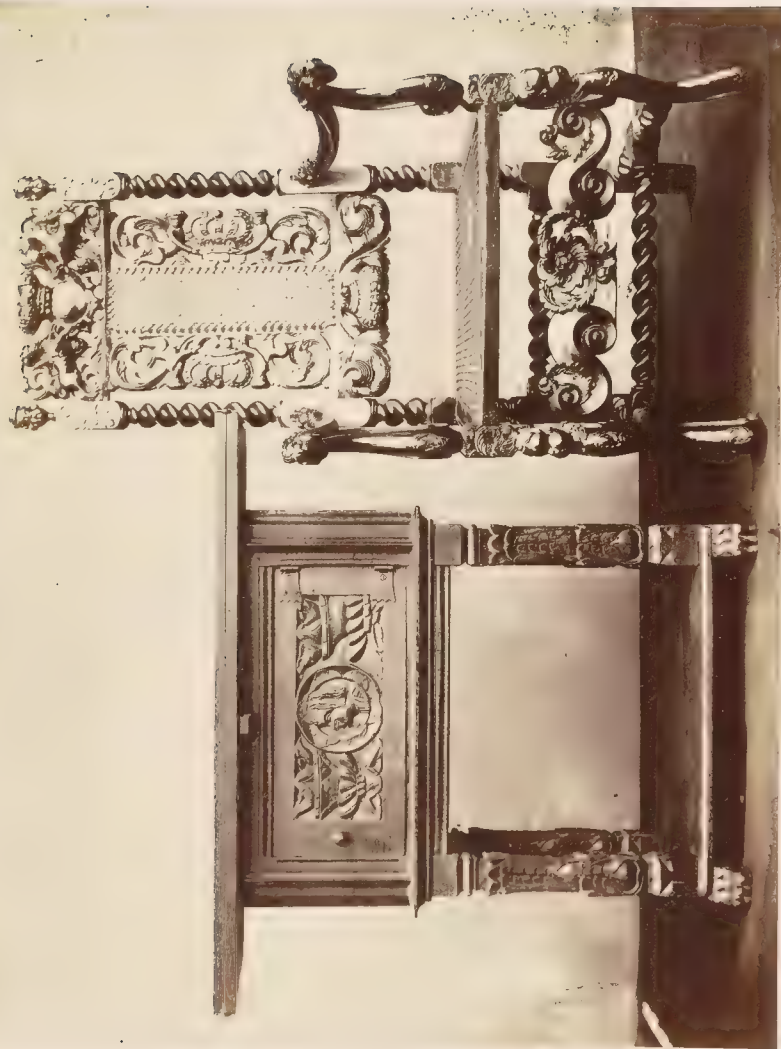




VII.  
CARVED CHESTNUT CABINET  
ITALIAN, EIGHTEENTH CENTURY  
*South Kensington Museum*



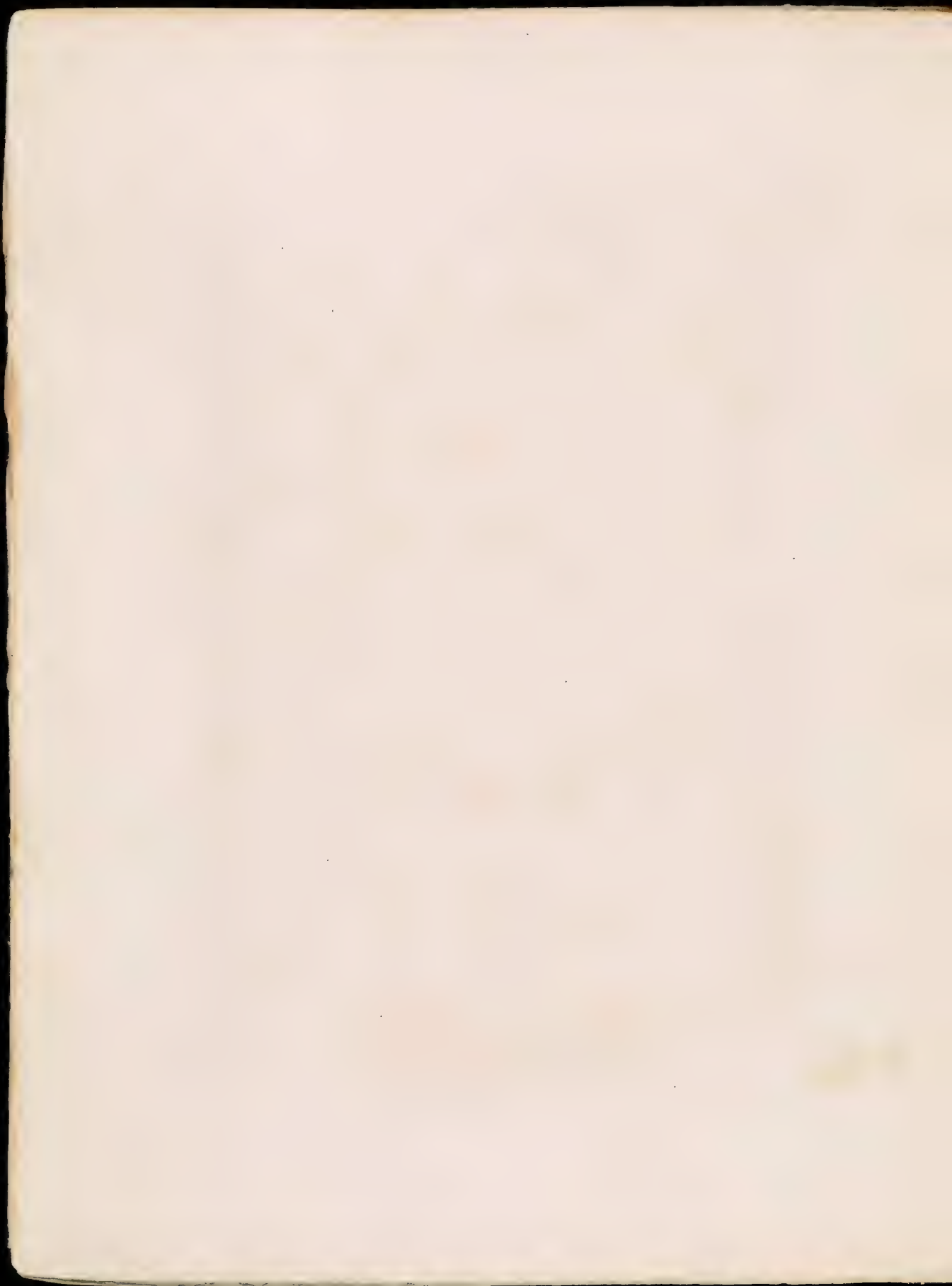




VIII.

OAK TABLE

15TH CENTURY, AND CHAIRS OF THE 17TH CENTURY. ENGLISH.  
*In the possession of Mr. Stubby.*





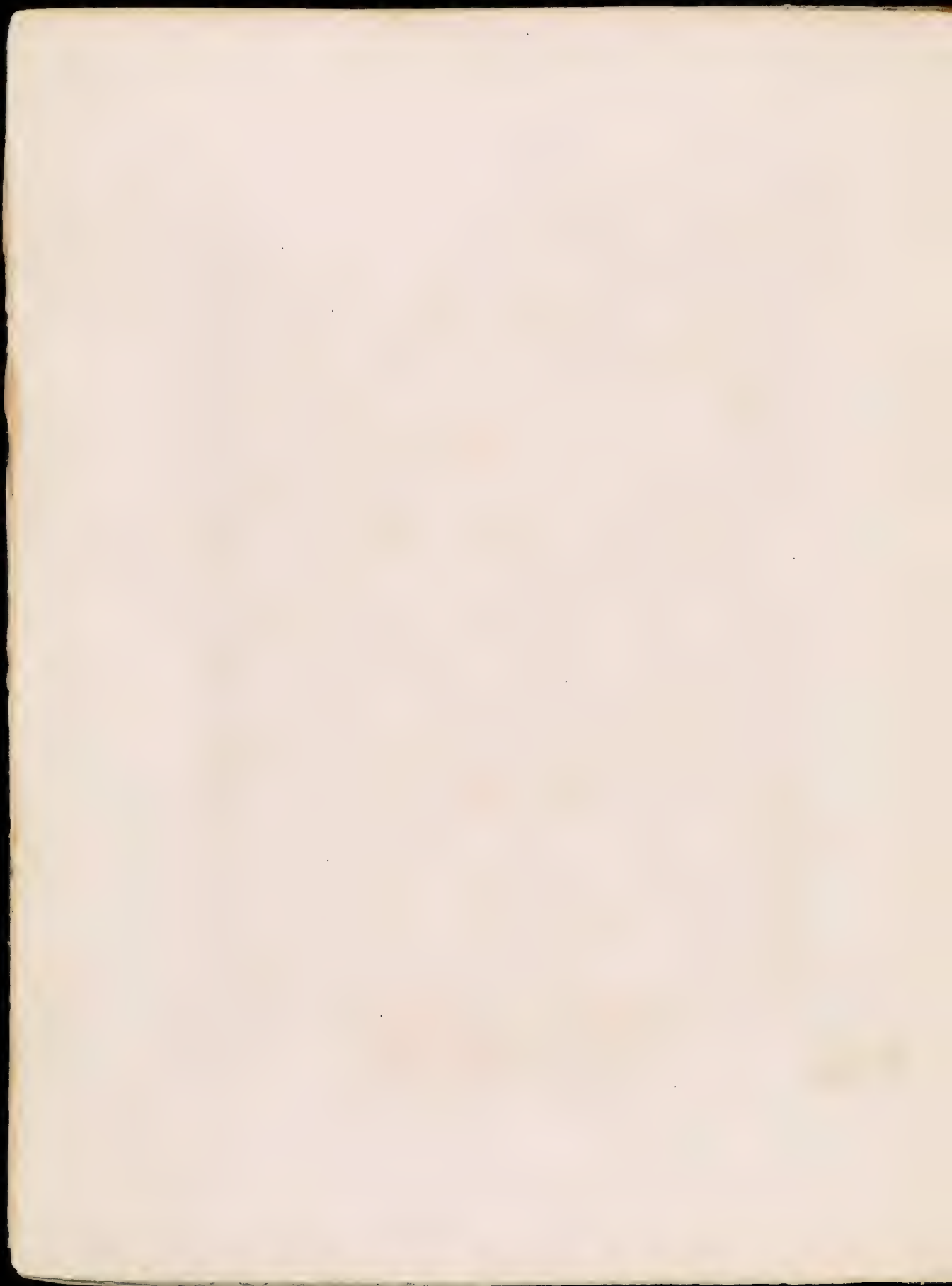


IX.

CHAIR

STUFFED, AND COVERED WITH CUI VERVE

*At Hampton Court*

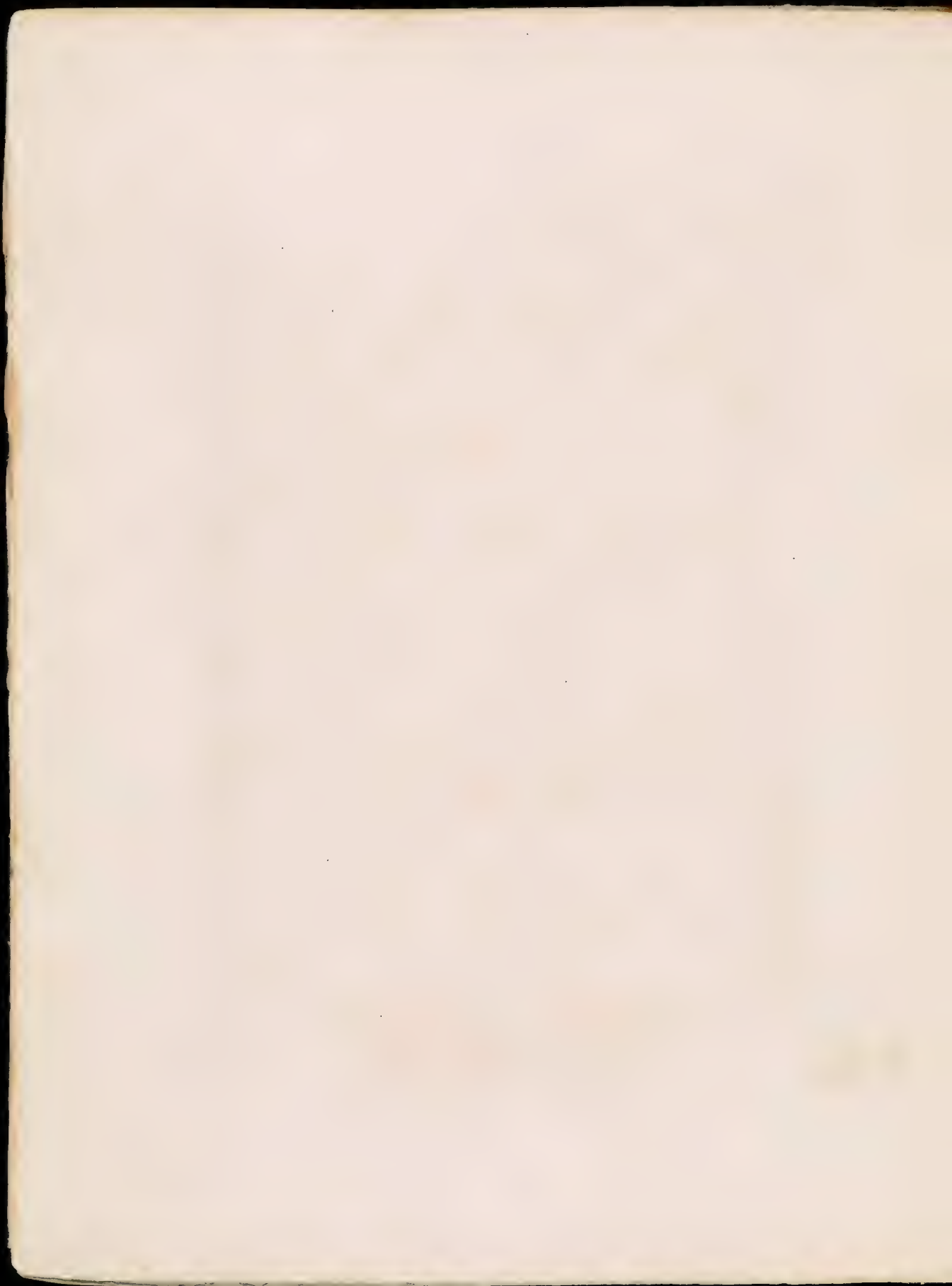




CHAIR

COVERED WITH GENOA VELVET, AND WITH A GOLD-TOILED  
 ENGLISH, 17TH CENTURY.  
*At Hampt. 1894*



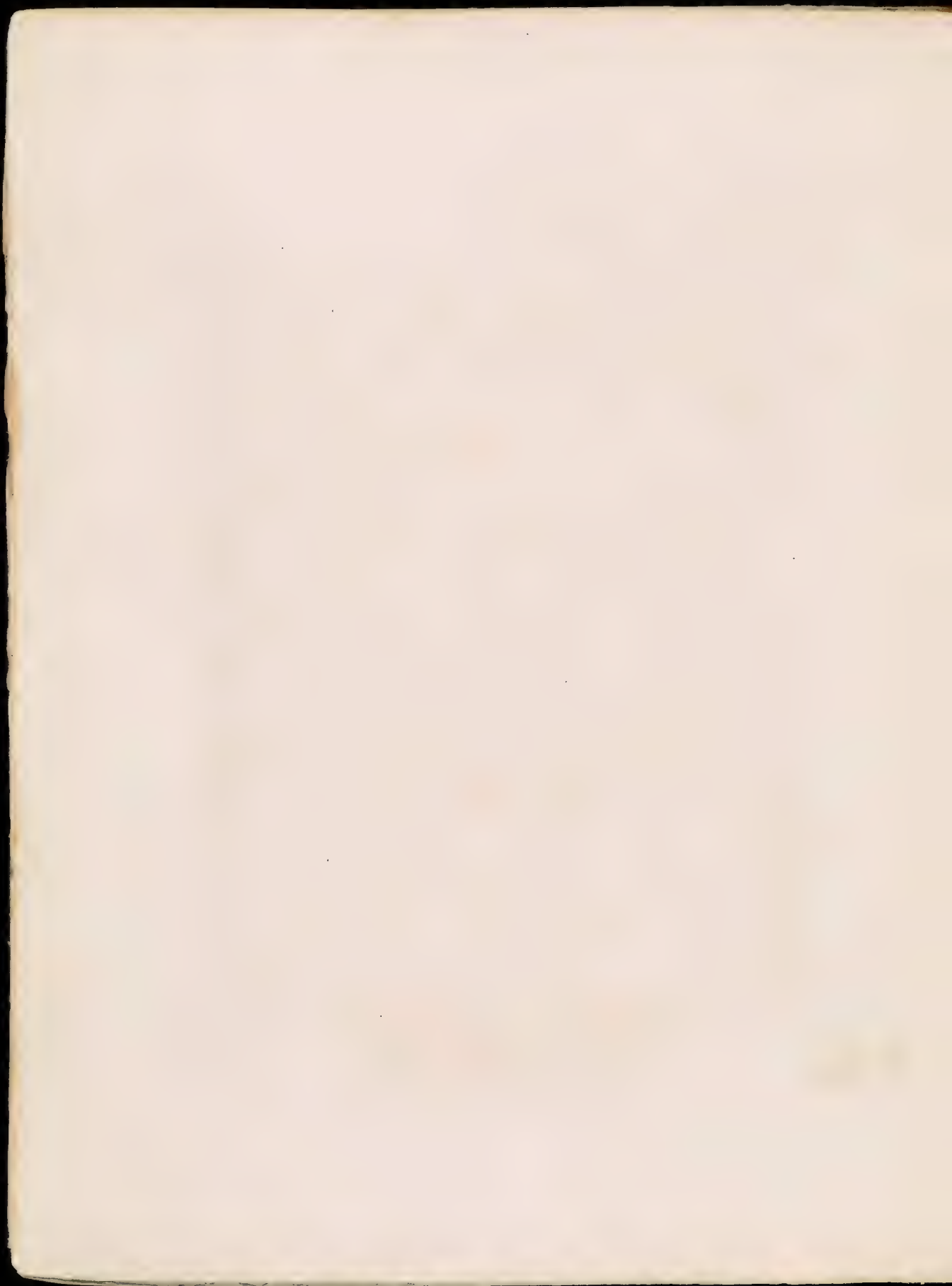




VI  
CHAIR

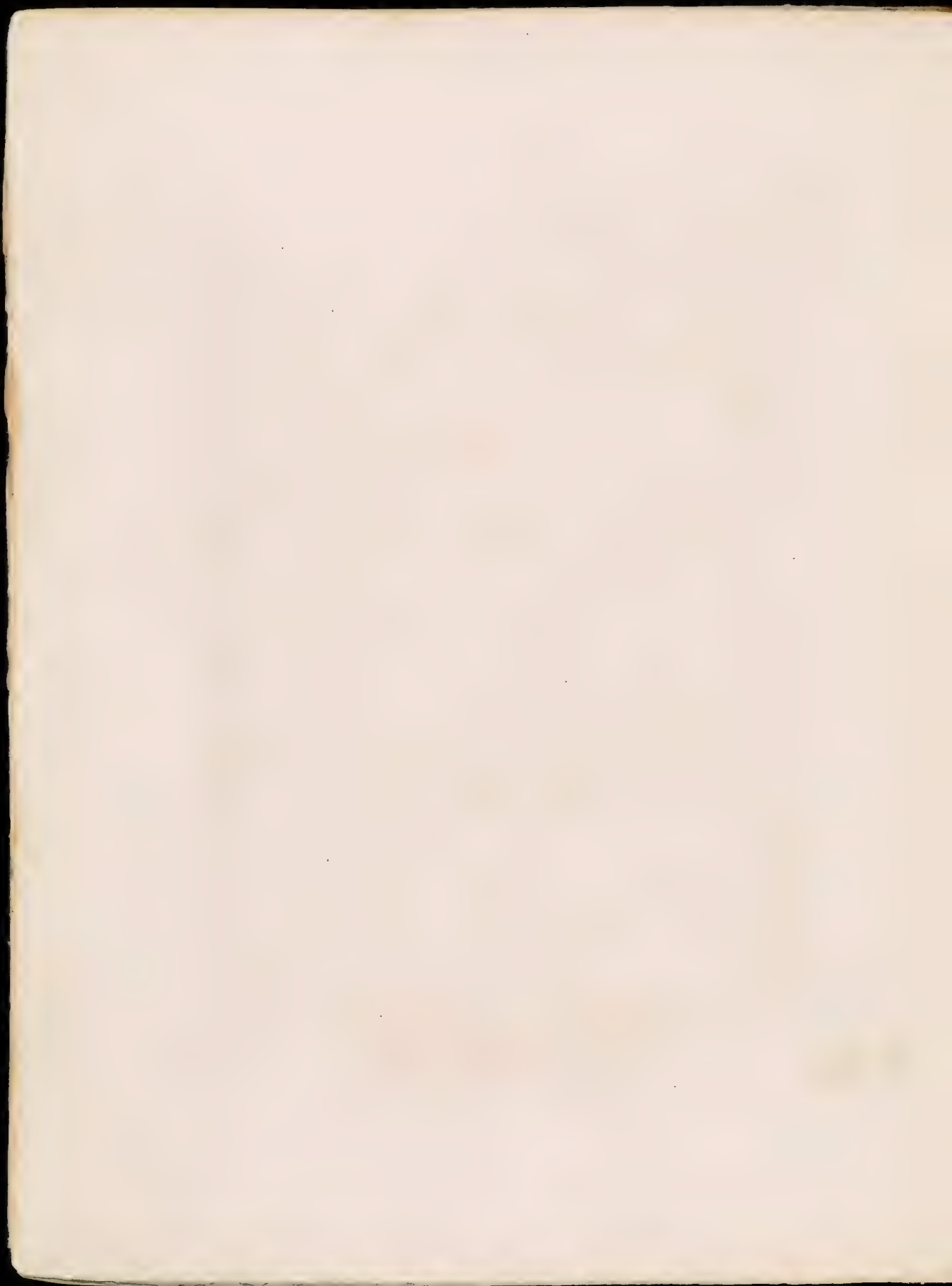
COVERED IN EMBROIDERED SILK. ITALIAN, 16TH CENTURY

*In the possession of Earl Ancherst*





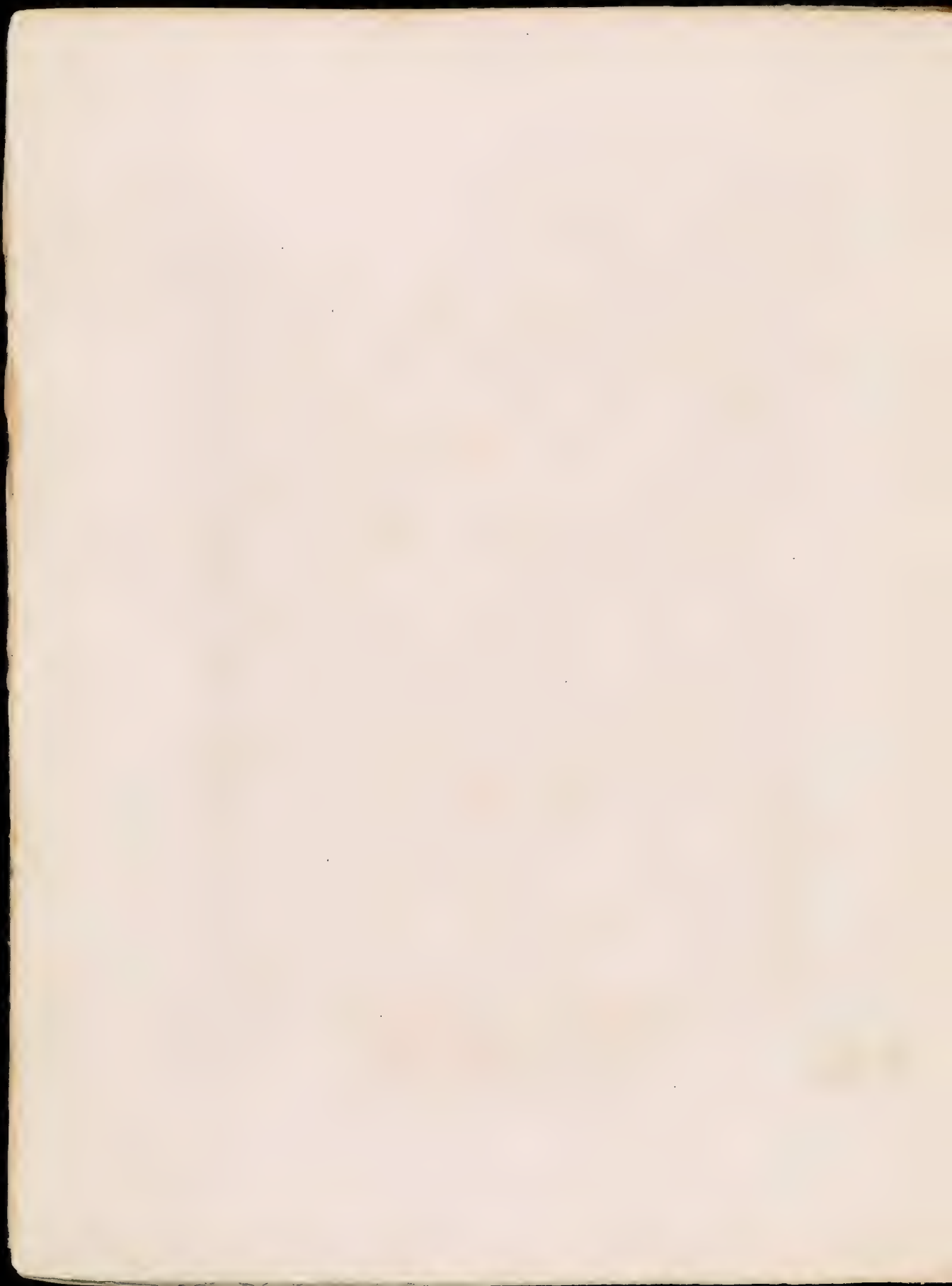






XII  
DRESSING TABLE AND GLASS  
IN SATIN WOOD. ENGLISH, ABOUT 1785





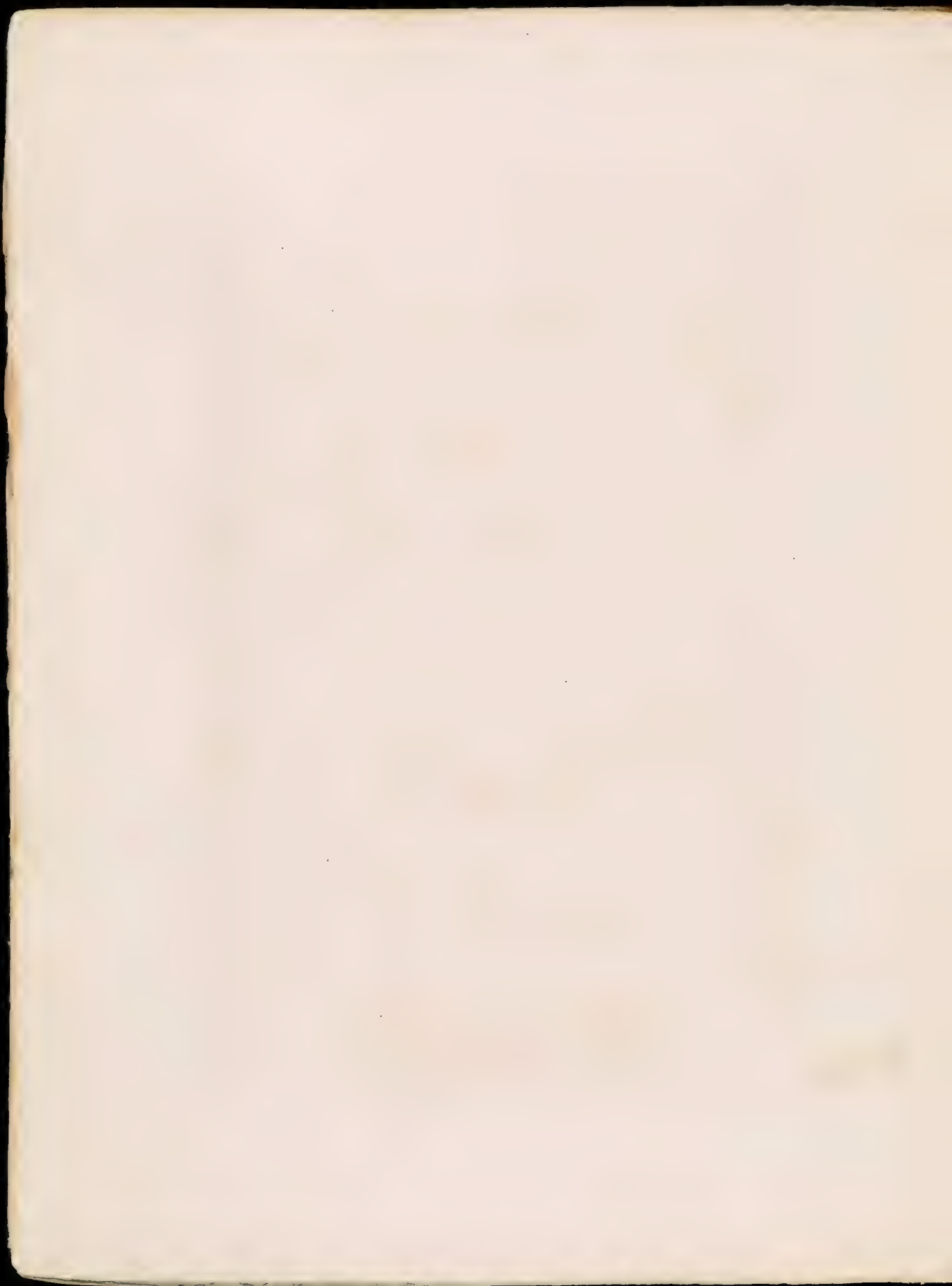


XIV.

CABINET.

CARVED WALNUT, IN TWO PARTS. ITALIAN, 16TH CENTURY

*South Kensington Museum.*





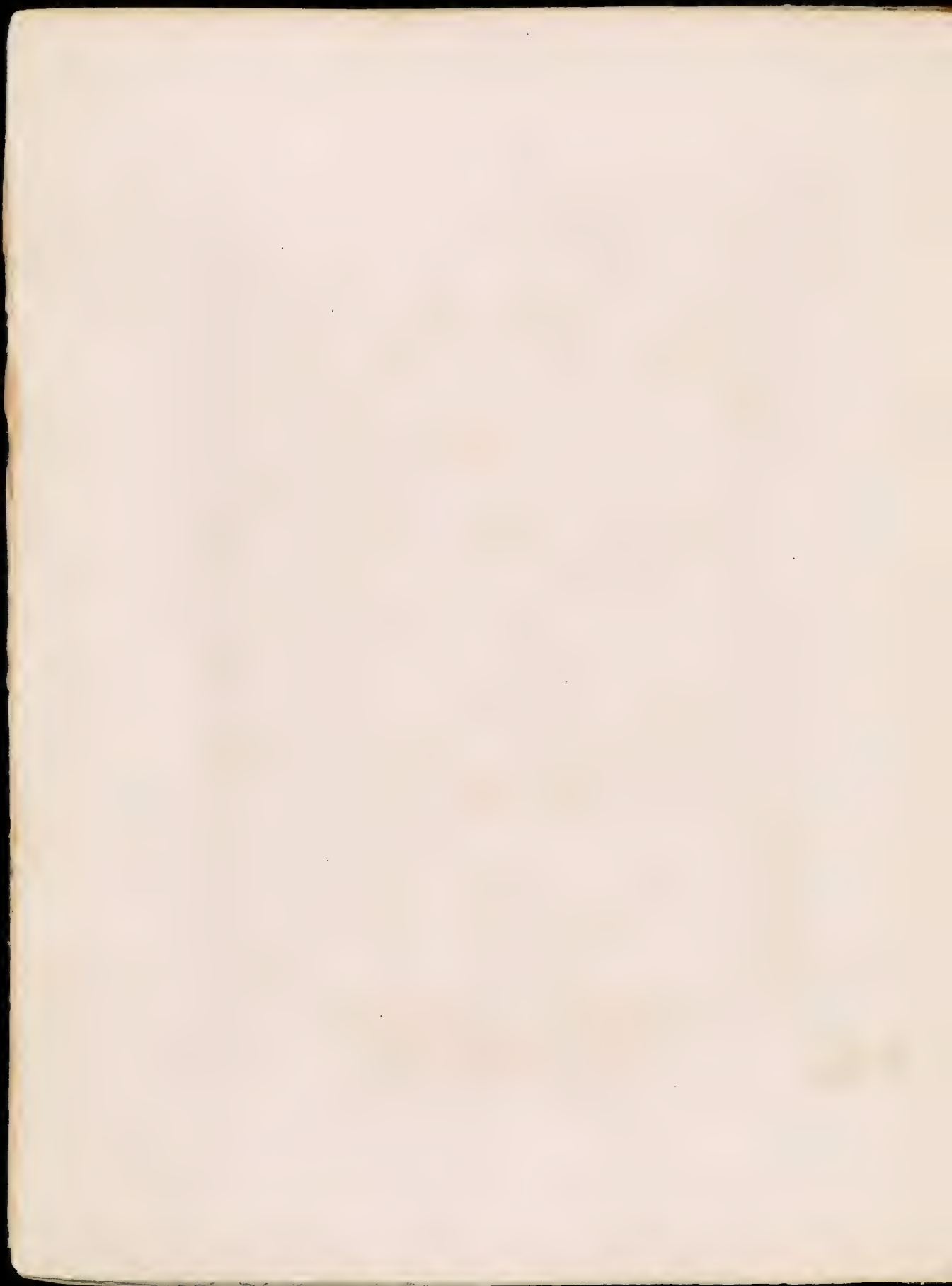


VI.

SMALL CABINET.

FIGURA D'OPRA WORK. 17TH CENTURY

*In the possession of the Duke of Buccleuch.*



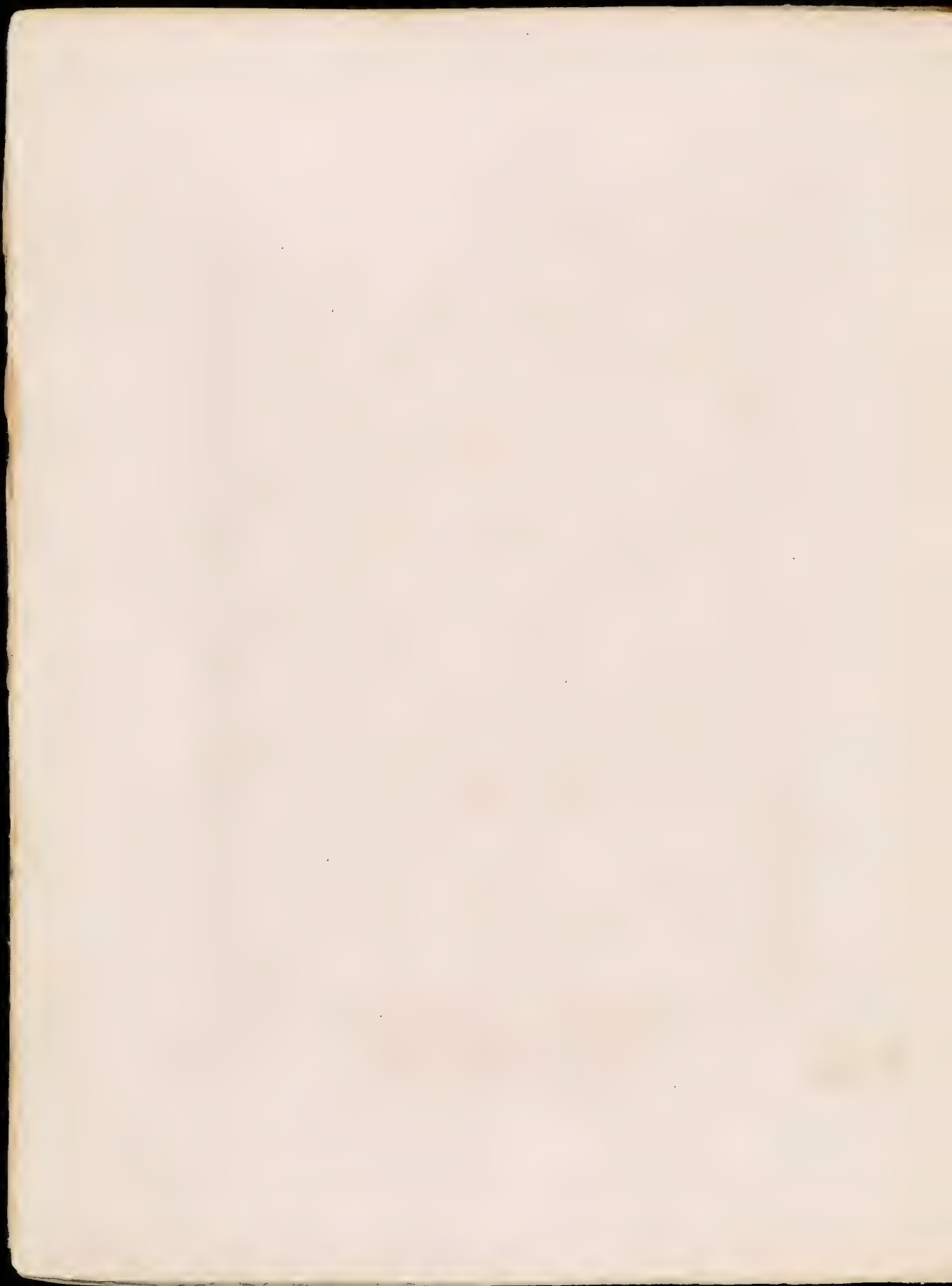


VI

CABINET

NEE W. DE L'ETAGNE ST. C. ENGLAND



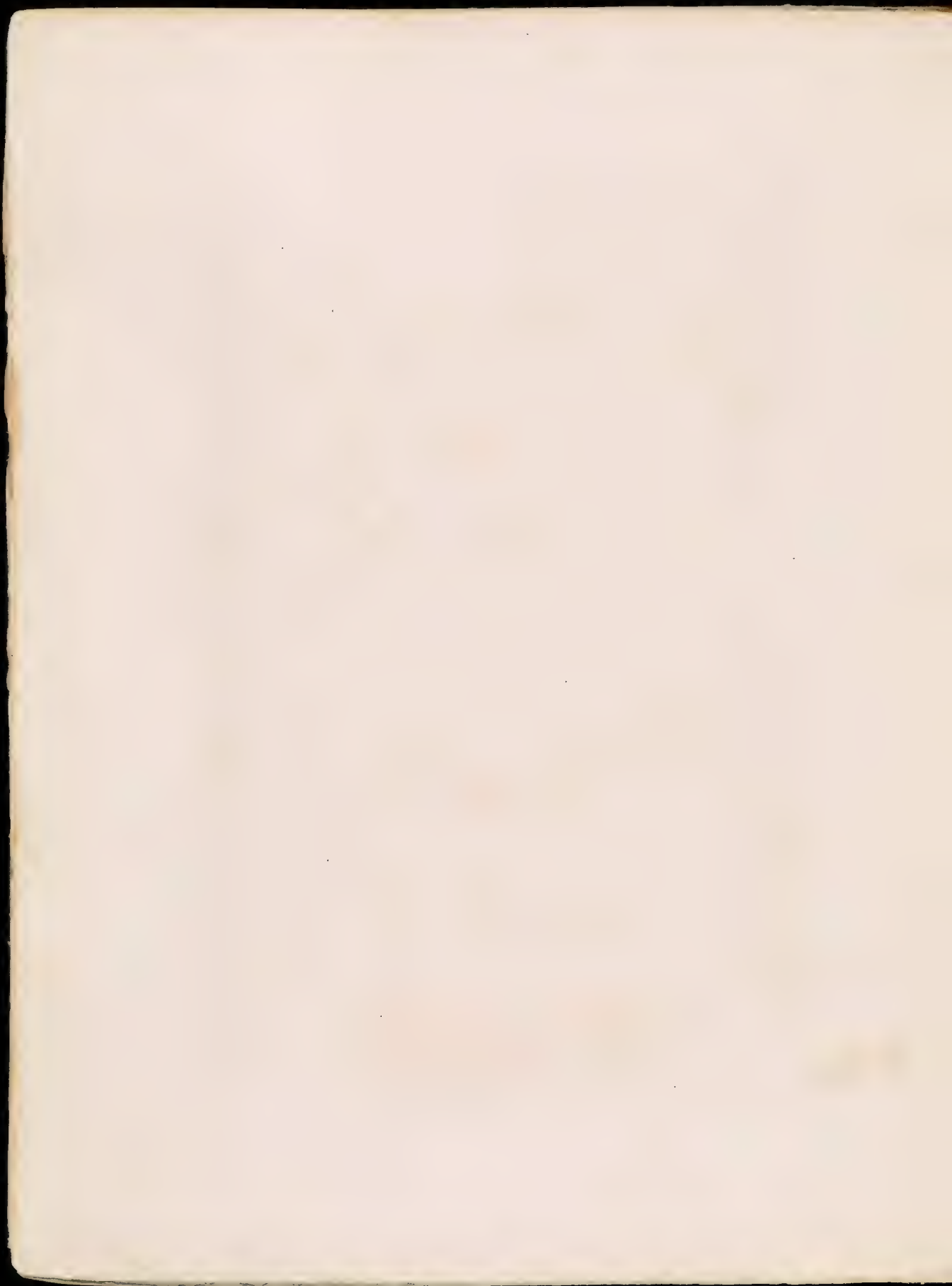




NO. 1.  
CABINET.

ONE AND A HALF FEET HIGH.

*Gift presented by the M. A. S.*



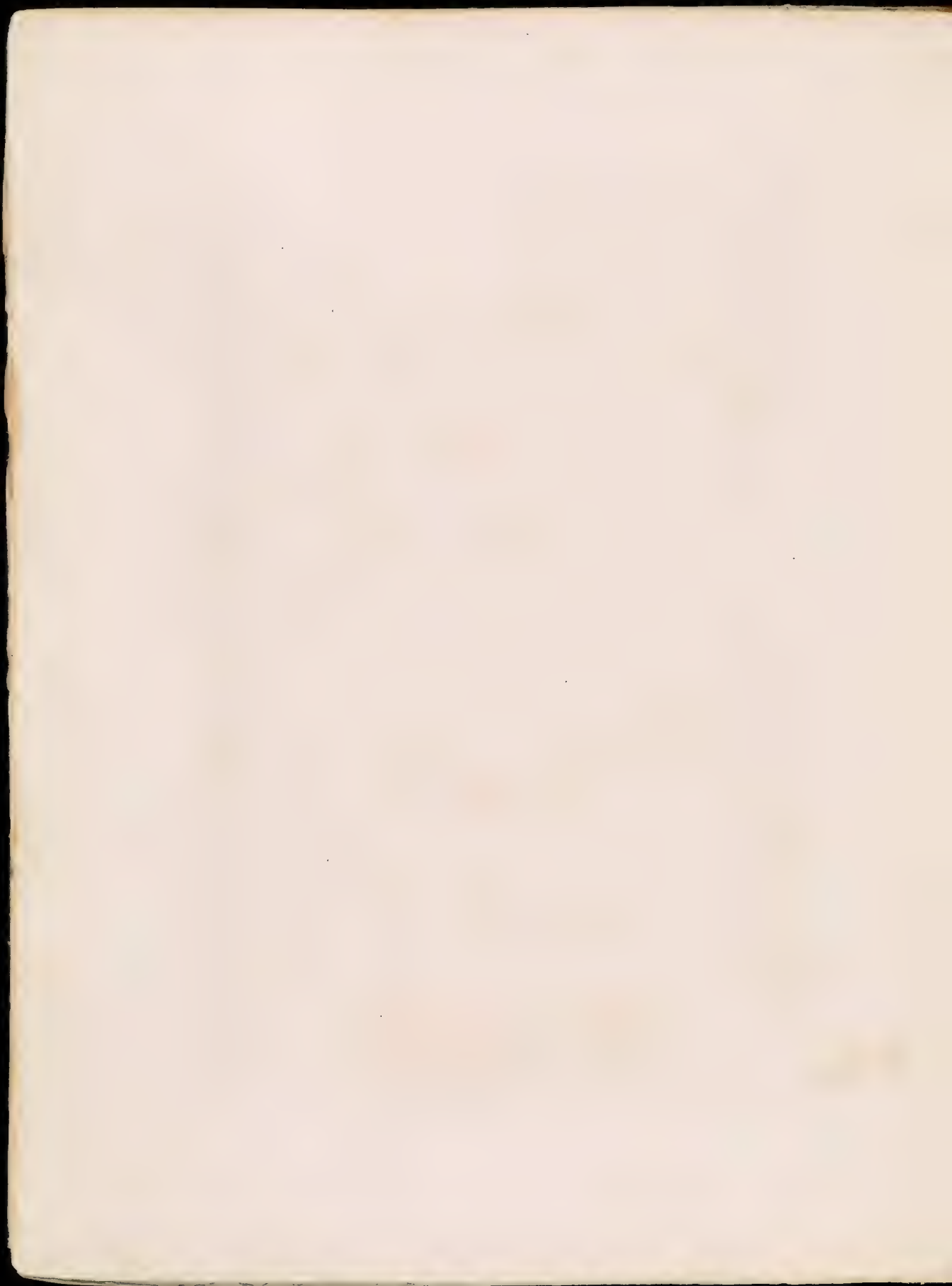




XVIII.

CABINET AND STAND

CARVED. GERMAN, 16TH CENTURY





CABINET

CARVED WORK AND INTARSIA. ENGLISH, 16TH CENTURY

*See also Plate 100 and 101*







XX.

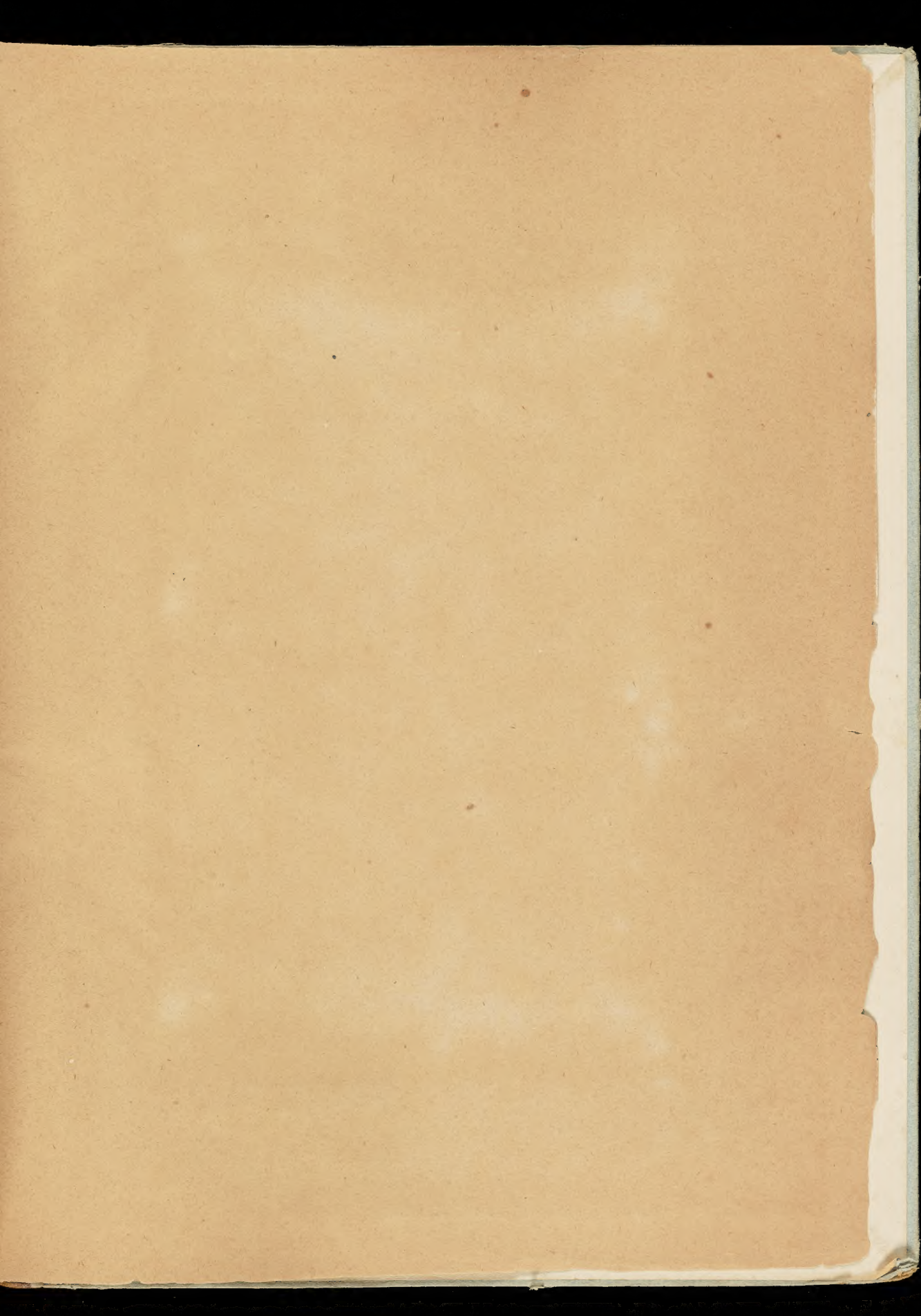
CHAIR.

PRESENTED TO THE EMPEROR RUDOLPH THE SECOND.

16TH CENTURY

*In the possession of the Earl of Radnor*







85-B10117



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